

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 6947

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: IR PINR SHUM
SUBJ: RESURGENCE IN RASTAKHIZ PARTY ACTIVITIES

REF: TEHRAN 6636

1. DURING THE PAST 2 WEEKS THERE HAS BEEN INCREASED ACTIVITY ON THE PART OF THE RASTAKHIZ PARTY LEADERSHIP BEGINNING WITH CONSTRUCTIVE WING LEADER HUSHANG ANSARY'S PRESS INTERVIEW ON JULY 25 (REFTEL). FOLLOWING THE ANSARY STATEMENT, PROGRESSIVE WING COORDINATOR ABDOLMAJID MAJIDI (WHO IS ALSO MINISTER OF STATE AND DIRECTOR OF THE PLAN AND BUDGET ORGANIZATION) DISCUSSED HIS WING'S PHILOSOPHY IN SEVERAL RECENT INTERVIEWS WITH THE LOCAL PRESS.

THAT WING HAS DEVELOPED A 6 POINT "PLATFORM" ENCOMPASSING THE FOLLOWING AREAS: EQUALITY UNDER LAW; PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY; DECENTRALIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE; ENVIRONMENT; CONCERNS OF YOUTH; AND OIL INCOME SUBSTITUTION.

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2. MAJIDI HAS EMPHASIZED PARTICULARLY THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL AFFAIRS, NOTING THAT PEOPLE "MUST BE KEPT INFORMED OF REALITIES, AND WE MUST PUT THE FACTS AND FIGURES AT THEIR DISPOSAL". AS DID ANSARY EARLIER, MAJIDI, ON AUG 3, SUPPORTED FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AS "AN INDISPUTABLE RIGHT OF ALL IRANIANS". HE ADDED THAT "THE GOVERNMENT MUST ALWAYS GUARD AGAINST THE VIOLATION OF

THESE PRINCIPLES, DUE TO RED TAPE, BY THE VERY OFFICIALS
CHARGED WITH CARRYING THEM OUT."

3. MAJIDI, ASKED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO CHARACTERIZE
THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PARTY'S TWO WINGS, HAS COMMENTED
THAT HIS RESPONSE WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT FORMULATION OF MORE
PRECISE CONSTRUCTIVE WING POLICIES. WHEN ASKED AUG 3
IF THE TWO WINGS WOULD BE REPRESENTED BY SEPARATE FACTIONS
IN THE MAJLES, PROGRESSIVE COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBER
DEPUTY HALAKU RAMBOD SAID THAT THE QUESTION WAS INITIALLY
CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED SINCE THE TWO WINGS AIM TO REIN-
FORCE PARTY SOLIDARITY AND WOULD NOT, THEREFORE, TAKE
SPECIFIC STANDS IN THE MAJLES. FOR HIS PART, ANSARY ON
JULY 27 SAID THAT HE FORESAW NO "CONFRONTATION" IN VIEWS
BETWEEN THE TWO WINGS.

4. APART FROM THESE PUBLIC APPEARANCES BY PARTY LEADERS,
THERE HAS BEEN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN EACH WING
DURING THE PAST FEW WEEKS. THE COORDINATING COMITE OF
THE PROGRESSIVE WING HELD ITS FIRST MEETING ON JULY 27 AT
WHICH DISCUSSION CENTERED ON A PROGRAM OF ACTION FOR THE
WING'S WORKING GROUPS AND PROVINCIAL COMITES AND A PLAN
FOR MEETINGS WITH THE PRESS OVER THE NEXT 6 WEEKS. ON
THE SAME DAY ANSARY ANNOUNCED THAT THE CONSTRUCTIVE WING
WOULD ALSO FORM WORKING GROUPS WHICH WILL EXAMINE IRAN'S
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL
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POLICIES. PRESUMABLY OUT OF THESE GROUPS WILL EMERGE THE
CONSTRUCTIVE WING'S "PLATFORM".

5. COMMENT: THESE PRONOUNCEMENTS CONTINUE THE CURRENT
GOI PUBLIC CAMPAIGN OF SUPPORTING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
ALBEIT WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF "CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM".
AT THE SAME TIME , THE RASTAKHIZ PARTY APPEARS TO BE
ENTERING A NEW PHASE OF INCREASED ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY.
IF PRESENT TREND CONTINUES, WE CAN EXPECT GREATER FOCUS ON
WING ACTIVITIES AND THE EXPOSITION OF TWO SEPARATE, BUT
COMPATIBLE, WING PLATFORMS OR APPROACHES TO SPECIFIC ISSUES.
ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WING ORGANIZATIONAL CONCEPT HAS NOT
YET RECEIVED SUCH EXTENSIVE PARTY ATTENTION AS TO CATCH THE
PUBLIC IMAGINATION. A REFLECTION OF PUBLIC ATTITUDE WAS
RECENT INTERVIEW IN LOCAL PRESS WITH ONE DR SEPEHR ZABIH,
IDENTIFIED ONLY AS AN "IRANIAN RESEARCH SCHOLAR AT UC,
BERKELEY," WHO STATED: "IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME WHY THESE
TWO WINGS SHOULD BE ACTIVE FOR A WHILE AND THEN LAPSE INTO
NON-ACTIVITY. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR PAST ROLES IN
SOCIETY AND I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEIR ROLES WILL BE IN THE
FUTURE." OBVIOUSLY GREATER EFFORTS BY THE PARTY ARE RE-
QUIRED IF RASTAKHIZ PHILOSOPHY IS TO EXTEND BEYOND A VERY

LIMITED CIRCLE OF GOVT LEADERS.

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